



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Inez Connor 202/343-5634

### FIRST SALE OF WILDLIFE CONTRABAND SET FOR SEPTEMBER 29

The largest single collection of ivory, fine reptile leather products, and other wildlife contraband will go on sale to the highest bidders September 29 as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service holds its first public sale to dispose of a 10-year accumulation of confiscated wildlife products.

An aging Federal building in Brooklyn will provide the unlikely backdrop for a public display of hundreds of ivory bracelets, necklaces, pins, pendants, and other art objects; crates of fashionable python, caiman, and alligator shoes, boots, purses, wallets, and briefcases; cases of elephant hide ice buckets, goblets, and tankards; fur garments; dozens of kudu and other animal horns; elephant tusks; baskets of protected Philippine seashells; and hundreds of trinkets and "bric-a-brac" made from the hides, horns, bones, feet, teeth, and other parts of wildlife.

The array of wildlife products will be available for inspection by prospective bidders on September 14-15 and again September 21-22 in Brooklyn from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Most of the thousands of objects will be sold in large commercial lots but about 25 percent will be suitable for individual or small lot purchasers. The sealed bid sale is being conducted by the General Services Administration. Bids must be received by 11 a.m. on September 29 and should be sent to: General Services Administration, Business Service Center, Room 1701, Bid Room, 7th and D Streets, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20407. Winning bids will be awarded by October 8.

The wildlife products became Government property after having been involved in violations of several U.S. wildlife conservation laws, many passed in the early 1970's. At the time the laws were passed, no provision was made for the eventual disposition of the items, nor was the huge buildup of seized material anticipated. Congress has since authorized the Service to dispose of confiscated wildlife under procedures spelled out in regulations issued in April 1982. Sale of those items in the stockpile that can legally be sold will reduce the cost of storing, protecting, and keeping track of hundreds of thousands of items. The proceeds, less expenses, will be deposited in the U.S. Treasury.

The products have been accumulating in the Service's law enforcement facilities across the the country, including Fairbanks, Alaska; Detroit, Michigan; Nashville, Tennessee; New Orleans, Louisiana; Chicago, Illinois; San Francisco, Long Beach, and Los Angeles, California; Seattle, Washington; New York City; Miami, Florida; Boston, Massachusetts; Baltimore, Maryland; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Houston, El Paso, Dallas, and Ft. Worth, Texas; Puerto Rico; and Washington, D.C.

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